

REMARKS

Filed concurrently herewith is a request for a one month Extension of Time which extends the Shortened Statutory period for response to October 27, 2005. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that this response is being timely filed.

The Official Action dated July 27, 2005 has been received and its contents noted. The Examiner is thanked for his review and consideration of this application.

Claims 5-16 are pending for consideration and claims 1-4 have been cancelled previously.

With reference now to the detailed Office Action, claims 5-8, 10, 12 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Particularly, the Examiner does not understand the third step of claims 5 and 6, and the Examiner does not understand how a halftone pixel is previously corrected by the redetermining means recited in claims 7-8. In response, Applicant respectfully notes that the third step of claim 5, for example, recites "correcting the result of the second step by changing a non-halftone pixel which is continuous to the halftone pixel determined at the second step or a halftone pixel previously corrected at the third step and has a density equal to or higher than a threshold density, to a halftone pixel". This means that the result of the third step is also updated in parallel with correcting the result of the second step. Therefore, in the third step, the result of the second step is corrected and the halftone pixel previously corrected at the third step is also corrected.

Having explained the claimed third step above with respect to claim 5, Applicant would like to request a personal interview with the Examiner to discuss the present invention and possible amendment to clarify the claim language, if necessary.

Claims 5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Fujiwara (U.S. Patent No. 6,775,031). Further, claims 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 stand objected to but would be allowable if independent claims 6 and 8 are rewritten or amended to overcome the §112, 2nd paragraph, rejection. These rejection and objection are respectfully traversed at least for the reasons provided below.

Applicant respectfully submits that a feature of the present invention is characterized in that the halftone determining section 40 comprises a primary halftone pixel determining means 46 and a redetermining means 49, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2 and page 17, lines 15-19, for example, in the specification which support the features of the second and third steps of claim 5, and the halftone pixel determining means and the redetermining means of claim 7. The halftone dot detector (182) of Fujiwara, on the other hand, does not appear to include

these features and function in similar manner as the halftone determining section of the presently claimed invention.

With respect to the §102(e) rejection of method claim 5, the Examiner asserts that the third step of claim 5 is anticipated by Fujiwara's correction unit (15), smoothing filter (151), pass-through circuit (152) and an edge enhancing circuit (153), wherein data is corrected, based on the result of the total judgment unit (188). However, Applicant respectfully asserts that the total judgment circuit unit (188), as well as its associated components, and its function have no relevance to the claimed third step, which is explained above.

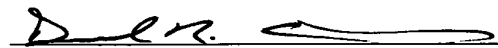
With respect to the §102(e) rejection of apparatus claim 7, which parallels method claim 5, the Examiner equates the redetermining means of claim 7 to the above-mentioned features of Fujiwara. Again, there appears to be no relevance between the claimed redetermining means and the judgment circuit and its associated components in Fujiwara.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the rejections and objection of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 5-16 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,

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